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**COALITION WARFARE:
SOVIET CONCEPTS AND EXPERIENCES**

MAJ Michael P. Peters
1980

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F O R E W O R D

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SUMMARY

In this paper the author discusses coalition warfare from the Soviet perspective. First, the general Soviet concepts of coalition warfare, particularly those of Sokolovskiy, are discussed. Second, the author provides a detailed discussion and analysis of the Soviet experience in combined operations with their Eastern European allies during World War II. The experiences gained in World War II are the foundation for current Soviet concepts. Third, the Warsaw Pact is presented as a Soviet instrument for the conduct of coalition warfare in Europe. The lessons of Warsaw Pact combined exercises have further refined Soviet concepts of coalition warfare. Fourth, based on evidence presented in the paper, the author summarizes how the Soviets might organize and conduct a coalition war in Europe. Finally, the author concludes that US and NATO planners must consider the Warsaw Pact as a military coalition.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A new world war will be a coalition war. In it on the one side will be the capitalist military coalition, on the other - the socialist states ...¹

Marshal Sokolovskiy, in the most authoritative open Soviet publication on strategy, suggests that the Soviets recognise the important role that military coalitions will play in a future war. He also suggests that the Soviets do not expect to conduct military operations in any future world war in isolation; rather, they anticipate waging war in conjunction with their allies.

The purpose of this paper is to determine, insofar as it is possible, how the Soviets might conduct combat operations with their Warsaw Pact allies. Toward this end, the Soviet experience of combined operations during World War II and the current methods they employ to prepare for combined operations will be examined.

The East Europeans provide 60% of the Warsaw Pact divisions and tactical aircraft in the European theater and 50% of its divisions and aircraft in the central region.² In spite of this, little attention has been paid to the way in which these allied units might be employed in combat. While one cannot expect to define precisely Soviet intentions in this regard, it is hoped that a better understanding of the Soviet concept of coalition warfare may be achieved. The majority of the information presented in this paper is from Soviet sources. This information has been supplemented by use of available Western sources.

The Warsaw Pact operates on the basis of one military theory, a single understanding of military science and the tasks of combat cooperation.³ Although each country may contribute to the development of this military theory and science, all Warsaw Pact armies operate primarily on the basis of Soviet military theory and science.⁴ According to Marshal Grechko, the Warsaw Pact shares, "... a commonality of military-strategic view and an identical understanding of the laws and patterns of war and the principles of military art and military development."⁵

If this is indeed the case, one must conclude that Soviet principles concerning the conduct of coalition warfare would be shared by her allies. Sokolovskiy provides a very specific description of how the Soviets will organize for combined operations in future conflicts:

For the conduct of combined actions in the theater of military action, operational formations and divisions and regiments of various Socialist countries may be created. The control of these formations may be given to the Supreme Command of the Soviet Armed Forces. Attached to the Supreme Command will be representatives of the Supreme Command of the allied countries. In some theaters of military action, operational formations of allied countries may be subordinate to their own Supreme Command. In such situations the control of these formations will be conducted by the principle of agreement of concepts and plans of operation and close coordination of the forces in the course of the operation

through representatives of these countries.⁶

This statement suggests that allied units in peripheral areas may be subordinate to their own Supreme Command; however, those units in the primary theater of operations would be subordinate to the Soviet Supreme Command. This concept of operations is justified, in the Soviet mind, by the superior experience of the Soviet Army.

Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact armies accept Soviet military theory and science and, in the main theater of action, they will be subordinate to the Soviet Supreme Command. The primacy of offensive operations is a basic element of Soviet military theory; therefore, it is to be expected that the allied armies are organized and trained to conduct offensive operations. Indeed, Marshal Grechko has stated, "In case of aggression, our (Warsaw Pact) armies are ready, not to conduct a passive defense, but to engage in active military operations, which could be immediately transferred to the territory of the enemy."⁷

The Soviets quite unambiguously assert that the basis of the combat power of the Warsaw Pact is the Soviet Armed Forces.⁸ This view is supported by the other members of the Warsaw Pact as well.⁹ As the basic element of combat power in the Pact, the Soviets would be expected to assume the primary combat missions. Non-Soviet units, therefore, could be expected to play a secondary, but nonetheless important, role in future combat operations.

On the basis of available Soviet information, it is impossible to state what the precise missions of the allied units would be. However, the tasks which allied units performed in World War II and the ways in which they were organized and controlled by the Soviets may provide some clue to their future employment. Therefore, it is appropriate at this point to review the Soviet experience with combined operations in World War II.

II. SOVIET WORLD WAR II EXPERIENCE

The Soviets accumulated considerable experience in combined operations during World War II. By the end of the war, Soviet allies had contributed over 30 infantry and cavalry divisions, 3 separate tank brigades, 2 aviation corps and one mixed aviation division, a total of more than four hundred thousand troops.¹⁰ Yugoslav and Bulgarian troops fought with the Soviets in the Belgrad Campaign. Two Romanian armies and one Bulgarian army participated in the Hungarian Campaign. Soviets, Yugoslavs and Bulgarians captured Vienna. In the Prague Operation, 2 Romanian armies, a Polish army, a Czech army corps and a Hungarian brigade participated.¹¹ By the end of the war, Bulgarians accounted for one-fourth of the combat personnel of the 3rd Ukrainian Front.¹²

Allied groups of forces, with the exception of the Yugoslavs, were operationally subordinate to a Soviet front. For example, in the Prague Operation, the 1st Ukrainian Front included the 2nd Polish Army; the 4th Ukrainian Front, the Czech Army Corps; and, the 2nd Ukrainian Front, the 1st and 4th Romanian Armies.¹³ During the Berlin Operation, the 1st Belorussian Front included the 1st Polish Army; and the 1st Ukrainian Front, the 2nd Polish Army, with a total Polish personnel strength of over two hundred thousand.¹⁴

Sokolovskiy considers the subordination of allied units to Soviet fronts "completely correct".¹⁵ In the Soviet view, it "ensured complete, unified,

centralized direction of Soviet and allied forces."¹⁶ In view of this experience, in any future operations the Soviets would be expected to place allied units under the operational control of their front commanders.

The Soviets used three basic methods of operation when working with their allies during World War II. These three methods were: 1) direct Soviet command of allied units; 2) operational control of allied units by Soviet fronts, which included a substantial liaison and advisory effort; and 3) operational coordination between Soviet and independent allied units. Polish units were often commanded by Soviet officers, and these units were directly integrated into Soviet fronts. Czech, Bulgarian, and Romanian units were under the operational control of a Soviet front; however, these units were not commanded by Soviet officers. Finally, Yugoslav units were never under the continuous control of a Soviet front; rather, they conducted independent operations in coordination with the Soviet command. At times Yugoslav units were operationally subordinate to Soviet commanders; however, this was for a limited duration and a specified tactical purpose. These three methods of operation required considerable organizational and operational flexibility and skill on the part of the Soviets.

Direct command of allied units by Soviet officers was most conspicuous in the Polish Army. The Soviets took an active and direct role in manning and commanding Polish units. Approximately 20,000 soldiers from the Soviet Army served in the Polish Army during World War II.¹⁷ The original Polish Division, formed in the Soviet Union in May 1943, had a total of 150 Soviet officers including the chief of staff, the assistant division commander, and the division artillery commander. Most of these officers were from the western regions of Belorussia and the Ukraine and spoke Polish.¹⁸ In the 1st Polish Corps, 65.8% of the officers in the 1st Division, and 76.3% of the officers of the 2nd Division were Soviet.¹⁹ Those officers who spoke Polish wore Polish uniforms and were integrated directly into the Polish divisions. Those who did not speak Polish wore Soviet uniforms and acted as instructors.²⁰

Throughout the war, Soviet generals and officers in the Polish Army occupied responsible positions as commanders of battalions, regiments, and divisions, chiefs of staff and staff officers.²¹ For example, the Chief of Staff of the 1st Polish Army, the Commander of the 1st Polish Tank brigade, and the Commander of the 1st Polish Aviation Corps were all Soviets.²² Apparently, service in the Polish Army did not hinder one's promotion potential in the Soviet Army. F.A. Agal'tsov, a Major General when he commanded the 1st Polish Aviation Corps, retired from the Soviet Army as a Marshal.²³ In addition, Marshal Rokossovskiy, a Soviet front commander during World War II, commanded the Polish Army after the war and retired from the Soviet Army as a Marshal.

Although this practice was most widespread in the Polish Army, Soviet officers and men served in other allied units as well. Soviet citizens were permitted to join Czech units formed on Soviet territory.²⁴ There were 21 Soviet officers and 148 Soviet soldiers in the Czech Brigade which was formed in the Soviet Union.²⁵ Soviet officers filled positions in the Romanian Volunteer Division established on Soviet territory, and over 50% of the aviation specialists in the 1st Czech Aviation Division were Soviets.²⁶

Direct Soviet involvement was particularly significant in the partisan effort. Soviet partisan units were active in Poland and Czechoslovakia. 450 Soviets were despatched to organize partisan activities in Czechoslovakia in 1944. These forces included entire Soviet partisan units.²⁷

Although the information is incomplete, direct Soviet command of allied units

may have been far more widespread than the above details suggest:

Commanders of armies and fronts constantly provided their opinion as to the accomplishment of combat missions (of allies). When the necessity arose they also took measures to help their brothers-in-arms accomplish the assigned mission in the assigned time and with fewer losses.²⁸

Given the Soviet penchant for understatement in such matters, it appears that Soviet advisers and instructors may have frequently acted more like commanders. US experience in Vietnam demonstrated how frustrating adviser duty can be, and how tempting it is to make the "right" decision for the allied commander. There is no reason to believe the Soviets were any more patient in this regard.

The basic method employed by the Soviets to control allied units in World War II was operational subordination. Even those allied units commanded by Soviet officers were under the operational control of a Soviet front. The concept of operational control employed by the Soviets in World War II is similar to the contemporary NATO concept. The Soviet commander was responsible for the planning and conduct of combat operations and the allied government and command were responsible for manning, supplying, and maintaining their units. In addition, the "host" government was required to satisfy all logistical needs of the Soviet Army located on its territory. The Soviet Army, however, remained the supreme authority in an undefined "zone of combat operations".²⁹

Allied units under the operational control of Soviet fronts were often further subordinated to lower level Soviet units. The 2nd Ukrainian Front Command placed the 4th Romanian Army under the control of the 27th Soviet Army and the 1st Romanian Army under the 53rd Soviet Army.³⁰ The Soviets also found it advisable to subordinate Romanian divisions to Soviet corps.³¹ Thus, although the Romanians contributed two armies to the 2nd Ukrainian Front, Romanian divisions were usually under the operational control of a Soviet army or corps commander rather than their own.

The Soviets proudly proclaim that Polish divisions, together with Soviet forces, participated in the liberation of Warsaw and other Polish cities.³² This emphasis on divisions indicates that the 1st Polish Army was not operating as a contiguous unit during these operations; rather, Polish divisions were subordinate to Soviet armies and corps.

Unified commands were not the rule in the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian Fronts; however, such commands did exist. A unified air defense system was established for Sofia in September 1944. The system was commanded by a Soviet colonel who had a Bulgarian deputy.³³ This precedent is followed on a larger scale by the Warsaw Pact today.

With the exception of the Romanian division created in the Soviet Union, Soviet officers and men did not serve in either Bulgarian or Romanian units. These units, having only recently changed allegiances, were integrated as contiguous units into the Soviet fronts, and they retained their national commanders. Soviet front commanders directed Bulgarian and Romanian units through special operational groups of Soviet officers who were attached to the front headquarters. Recognizing the difficult political situation which existed in Bulgaria and Romania, the Soviets apparently saw the special operational groups as a means of bringing Bulgarian and Romanian troops into combat without further complicating and possibly enflaming an already tense situation. In the Romanian case, the special operational group may have helped the Soviet front

commander to overcome the Romanian-Russian language barrier. Special operational groups apparently were not necessary in those fronts that dealt with Polish and Czech units. This probably is due in part to the large contribution the Soviets made in organizing, training and arming Polish and Czech units. In addition, the political situation in Poland and Czechoslovakia was not as potentially dangerous to the Soviets as it was in the Balkans.

The Soviets used a large number of liaison officers, advisers and instructors to help control their operationally subordinate allied units. It was common to find a representative of the Soviet General Staff in allied units.³⁴ For example, Colonel N.M. Molotov, accompanied by a group of Soviet officers, was the representative of the Soviet General Staff to the 1st Polish Army. These representatives reported directly to the General Staff without following normal command channels.³⁵ Soviet instructors and advisers attached to allied units were generally subordinate to the General Staff representative.³⁶ This procedure, which by-passed the front commander, ensured the centralized control which the Soviet Supreme Command valued so highly.

In dealing with Bulgaria, Soviet front commanders maintained liaison through the Allied Control Commission in Sofia and through liaison representatives in subordinate units.³⁷ For example, the Commander of the 3rd Ukrainian Front despatched an assistant commander of one of his Soviet divisions to be his representative at the 1st Bulgarian Army headquarters.³⁸

Soviet allies maintained liaison representatives at the Soviet front headquarters as well. A major general led the military mission of the Bulgarian Peoples Army to the 3rd Ukrainian Front. His function was to serve as a channel of communication between his government, military ministry, general staff, and the 1st Bulgarian Army and the command or special operational group of the 3rd Ukrainian Front.³⁹

In addition to liaison representatives, the Soviets provided advisers and instructors to allied units.⁴⁰ As mentioned earlier, these advisers and instructors were controlled by the senior representative of the Soviet General Staff in the unit. The Soviets were particularly active in training and advising allied units created on their territory. Two hundred and fifty Soviet officers-instructors, for example, helped form the Independent Czech Brigade.

The prerogatives of Soviet front commanders in dealing with a subordinate allied unit differed. Operations conducted with Polish or Czech forces were relatively simple, and Soviet command authority over Polish and Czech units was unequivocal, to the extent that Marshal Konev, the Commander of the 1st Ukrainian Front, could conduct a wholesale restructuring of the command of the Czech Army Corps under his operational control. He relieved the Czech Corps Commander and a brigade commander.⁴² In another incident, the Soviet front Military Council, displeased with the work of the Czech Army Corps staff, ordered the corps commander to restructure his staff.⁴³

The following two incidents indicate that Soviet control was not so unequivocal in the Balkan area. Following a serious Romanian defeat in October 1944, Marshal Malinowski, Commander of the 2nd Ukrainian Front, "demanded of the General Staff and Commander of the 1st Romanian Army Corps, that actions be taken to raise the combat proficiency of the troops and ensure the troops were provided antitank weapons."⁴⁴ In addition, "officers of the Soviet Operational Group presented to the commander of the 4th Romanian Army a list of desires

directed to revive the combat activity of the regiments and divisions ..."⁴⁵
(emphasis added).

It is clear from these incidents that the Soviets were not in a position to order certain changes in the Romanian Army, nor were they in a position to improve the material readiness of their ally. Soviet control, at least in the 2nd Ukrainian Front, was limited indicating that the Soviets did not control all the staff and supply functions of their subordinate allied armies.

Although severe insufficiencies existed within the Romanian Command and Staff, the Soviets refrained from restaffing the units, as they had done in the Czech Army Corps.⁴⁵ The size of the allied forces may have been a factor in this decision. The Romanians contributed two armies, although understrength, to the 2nd Ukrainian Front; the Czech contribution was one corps. In addition, the Czech corps had been organized in the Soviet Union and the Romanians had only recently switched to the Soviet side. The Soviets apparently also had a cadre of capable and loyal officers to replace those removed in the Czech Corps. The situation in the Romanian Army was totally different. Although the Soviets consistently questioned the capabilities of the Romanian officers, they had no reserve from which to draw replacements. In addition, the dissimilarity in languages further precluded staffing Romanian units with Soviet officers.

The planning and conduct of front operations in which allies participated was done primarily by the Soviet Command.⁴⁷ In the Balkans, where allied units had only recently joined the Soviet cause, the Soviets did their best to gain allied concurrence early in the planning process. For example, during the planning phase of the Belgrad Operation, the Stavka, General Headquarters of the Soviet Supreme Command, ordered Marshal Tolbukhin, Commander of the 3rd Ukrainian Front, to personally reach agreement with the Bulgarian Command.⁴⁸ Soviet and Bulgarian representatives met to work out details of the Bulgarian portion of the operation.⁴⁹ The final plan was approved by Marshal Tolbukhin and the Bulgarian Command and was submitted for approval to the Stavka.⁵⁰

Hence, the planning sequence of the 3rd Ukrainian Front conformed to the following pattern; the Stavka provided the front commander with general guidance; the front commander, with allied participation, drew up the concept of the operation; the final plan was then approved by the Stavka. Thus, while the Soviets retained final authority, the Bulgarians were in a position to influence the concept of the operation.

Once the plan had been approved, the front commander, both personally and through his representatives at the allied headquarters, ensured that allied staff work was in consonance with the concept of the operation.⁵¹ The Soviets tried to respect the internal order of the Bulgarian units, and "... only helped them to organize actions ... according to the general assignment of the front. Written orders (presumably beyond the initial operations order) were not issued ... Personal contact was substituted for written orders."⁵² This personal contact was provided within the Bulgarian Army by Soviet advisers attached to units down to regimental level. All questions of mutual action between Bulgarian and Soviet units were decided by the Soviet front representative attached to the Bulgarian army staff.⁵³

Soviet advisers at army and division level took an active part in planning operations and issuing orders. They were located with the allied troops during combat, probably to provide unbiased reports to the Soviet front. In addition, "they gave lectures and conducted practical classes on antitank combat, use of artillery, organization of combined operations, staff procedures, camouflage and

mine laying and clearing.⁵⁴

Soviet-Yugoslav operations illustrate the third method of control and co-ordination used by the Soviets when working with allied armies. The Soviets conducted operations with the Yugoslavs without the benefit of operational control. This experience provides a further indication of what future Soviet allied relations may be during combat operations.

After the Tehran Conference of 1943, the Soviets despatched a liaison team led by General N.V. Korneyev, to the National Liberation Army of Yugoslavia.⁵⁵ This was followed by the despatch of advisers, instructors and officer representatives to the main staffs of the republic forces.⁵⁶ Tito did not rely totally on these liaison missions and, in the fall of 1944, without the knowledge of the Soviet Liaison Mission, he flew to Moscow for direct negotiations with Stalin.⁵⁷

As a result of these discussions, Tito agreed to allow Soviet troops to enter Yugoslav territory and to cooperate with the Soviet forces upon their arrival. It was agreed that the Soviet Supreme Command would outline the general concept for combined operations in Yugoslavia, starting from the situation at the front, and that the Yugoslavs would work out those parts of the general plan which directly affected them.⁵⁸ The Yugoslav units were not to be subordinate to the Soviet front; therefore, close coordination was important. Given these general guidelines, Tito returned to Yugoslavia.

The Belgrad Operation, a joint Yugoslav, Bulgarian, Soviet endeavor, provides a good outline of the Soviet approach to coordinating combat operations with a non-operationally subordinate allied army. General Korneyev, the Chief of the Soviet Liaison Mission to the National Liberation Army, coordinated the activities of the 3rd Ukrainian Front Staff, the Soviet General Staff, to whom he was directly subordinate, and the Yugoslavs. Following Yugoslav agreement, the 3rd Ukrainian Front sent its concept of the operation to the Stavka through the Soviet General Staff. Early Yugoslav agreement was particularly crucial in this case, as the concept of the 3rd Ukrainian Front envisioned the use of Bulgarian troops on Yugoslav territory. The Yugoslavs, through Korneyev, were aware of the precise concept as it was sent forward. The Stavka accepted, with some changes, the concept of the 3rd Ukrainian Front, however, Tito's personal approval was required before the plan with the Stavka's changes was binding with the Yugoslavs.⁵⁹ Having obtained Tito's approval, Soviet, Yugoslav and Bulgarian representatives worked out the details of the operation.⁶⁰

The Front Commander directed the staff of the 57th Soviet Army to discuss, in a "timely manner", questions of mutual action with the commander and staff of the Yugoslav 14th Corps.⁶¹ Direct contact was established between these two units, and the commanders agreed on the details of their combined operation, including resupply of the Yugoslav units.⁶² This coordination included, with the approval of the Yugoslav and Soviet Commands, the subordination of certain Yugoslav units to the 4th Soviet Guards Mechanized Corps for the final assault on Belgrad.⁶³

It is worthwhile mentioning that occasionally Soviet units were placed under allied control. Allied units frequently received substantial combat support from the Soviets. Soviet artillery was routinely attached, as is the Soviet custom, to allied maneuver units. For example, in the Carpathian Operation the 2nd Infantry Brigade of the Czech Corps was assigned a Soviet howitzer regiment.⁶⁴ Earlier at the battle of Kharkov, a Czech battalion had two

Soviet artillery battalions, a battalion of "Katyushas" and 24 tanks attached.⁶⁵ In the course of offensive operations in March 1945, the 1st Bulgarian Army had the following Soviet fire support attached: an artillery regiment, a tank-destroyer artillery brigade, and a battalion of mortars.⁶⁶ The Yugoslavs, even though they were not subordinate to the Soviet front, had Soviet artillery units attached during the Belgrad Operation.⁶⁷ In addition to field artillery support, two Soviet aviation divisions were placed under the operational control of the Yugoslavs.⁶⁸

Fire support elements were by far the most commonly attached Soviet units; however, the attachment of Soviet maneuver units to allied forces was not unheard of. In the abortive Vistula crossing in support of the Warsaw uprising, the 226th Guards Rifle Regiment was under the operational control of the 1st Polish Army.⁶⁹

Soviet World War II experience and the statements of Marshal Sokolovskiy quoted earlier indicate that in future combined operations allied armies might initially be under the operational control of Soviet fronts in the main theater of operations. The situation may change as combat operations progress; for example, if a country initially not allied with the Soviet Union were to enter the war on her behalf. In this case, the World War II Soviet-Yugoslav relationship might be more appropriate. However, given the possible short duration of a future European war, this contingency is not an important consideration for Western planners. Evidence from World War II operations further indicates that Soviet front commanders may subordinate their allied units to Soviet armies and corps and perhaps lower. Since the Soviets will be operating initially with standing allied armies, it is unlikely that Soviet officers will *directly command* allied units, as they did in Poland in World War II. However, if the war were to be prolonged, one might observe the creation of military units in the Soviet Union from disparate elements of sympathetic Western Europeans. A French unit, partially manned and commanded by Soviets, might be an example.

Accepting the fact that during future combat some non-Soviet Warsaw Pact forces (NSWP) will likely serve in Soviet fronts, what kinds of missions might they be expected to be assigned? Here again, the Soviet World War II experience may be relevant.

Soviet commanders in World War II were circumspect in the combat missions they assigned allied units. Polish forces were primarily assigned flank covering missions.⁷⁰ The Bulgarian 1st Army consistently covered the flank of the 3rd Ukrainian Front during offensive operations and at Lake Balaton they, along with the Yugoslavs, anchored the left flank of the 3rd Ukrainian Front's defensive positions. Marshal Tolbukhin did not expect this sector of the front to receive the main German attack.⁷¹ Similarly, in the Prague Operation, the Czech Army Corps secured the left flank of the Soviet 18th Army.⁷²

NSWP units were also employed in the second echelon during offensive operations. During the Carpathian Operation of September 1944, the Czech Army Corps was in the second echelon of the 1st Ukrainian Front. The concept of the operation required the Czechs to exploit the penetration achieved by the first echelon forces. Unfortunately, according to Soviet sources, the Corps Commander failed to establish communications with neighboring units and, as a result, improperly committed his forces. This action significantly slowed the tempo of the operation and allowed the Germans to reinforce.⁷³ This led Marshal Konev, Commander of the 1st Ukrainian Front, to relieve the Corps Commander.

The fact that the Czech Corps Commander had been appointed by the Czech Government in London rather than the Czech Mission in Moscow, probably contributed as much to his dismissal as his tactical insufficiencies.

NSWP armies were often employed more for political than tactical reasons. The Soviets quite specifically state that the Czech Corps was shifted to "render serious influence on the entire political life of the liberated regions."⁷⁴ Czech troops were the first to enter Czech soil but not as part of a contiguous corps.⁷⁵ Likewise, the Romanian Volunteer Division entered Bucharest with the first wave of Soviet troops.⁷⁶

The Polish 1st Army was moved into the first echelon of the front on the east side of the Vistula in preparation for the crossing in support of the Warsaw uprising.⁷⁷ The staff of the 1st Polish Army was assigned the task of organizing the operation to assist the uprising.⁷⁸ The fact that the Soviet front would delegate this mission, especially in view of the detailed planning procedures and control required by the Stavka, indicates the low priority which the Soviets assigned to the operation. Nonetheless, the Soviets understood its political importance and provided at least token support to the Polish effort.

In summary, Soviet front commanders generally avoided using allied forces in the main attack. During offensive operations allied forces primarily provided flank security or operated in the second echelon, where they supported the successes achieved by the first echelon Soviet forces. In those cases where allied units were in the first echelon of an attack, it was usually for political rather than tactical reasons. During defensive operations the allies principally anchored the flank. They were not situated astride primary avenues of approach. Finally, allied partisan units were employed by the Soviets to disrupt the enemy's rear. While it is not certain that allied units will perform the same kinds of missions in the future, their World War II experience serves as a guide to possible future combat missions.

Military history plays an important role in contemporary Soviet doctrine. As Marshal Grechko pointed out:

The value of military history is in the creative perception of the experience and the lessons of the past, in the capability to disclose the regular laws of the development of methods for the conduct of war, in its boundless capabilities for the expansion of the military world outlook and military thinking of officers and generals.⁷⁹

Bearing in mind the Soviet experience in World War II and recognizing the value of military history in analyzing contemporary Soviet doctrine, a look at the current Soviet military alliance, the Warsaw Pact, is worthwhile.

III. THE WARSAW PACT AND SOVIET COALITION WARFARE

The Warsaw Treaty Organization is the agency through which the Soviets plan and train for military operations with their European allies. In conjunction with the analysis of the Soviet World War II experience, the study of the military organization of the Warsaw Pact will permit some reasonable conclusions as to how the Soviets might conduct future combined operations.

The system for establishing Warsaw Pact military policy follows, as might be expected, the Soviet model. Soviet military thought is the basis of Warsaw Pact military policy and this fact justifies a good deal of interference by the Soviets in Pact policy. However, the Soviets continually emphasize that the Warsaw Pact organization is a supernational institution and that the "principle of observation of the sovereign rights of all participating states lies at the base of all activities ..."⁸⁰

The Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact parallels the Soviet Defense Council. (For an outline of the Warsaw Pact military structure see Appendix A). Sessions are conducted approximately once a year and are held on the level of the general or first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist or Workers Parties, or heads of government.⁸¹ In a sense, the Political Consultative Committee formulates the military doctrine of the Warsaw Pact, which usually amounts to confirming Soviet military doctrine.⁸² There are exceptions, and the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, may be an example.

The Committee of Defense Ministers of the Warsaw Pact was created at the 1969 meeting in Budapest of the Political Consultative Committee and is the "highest military organ of the Warsaw Pact".⁸³ It is concerned, as the name might imply, with the type of questions addressed by the Soviet Ministry of Defense. At the 1971 meeting in Budapest, for example, the Committee discussed measures to further perfect the system of communication and means of control of the armies of the Warsaw Pact.⁸⁴ Like the Political Consultative Committee, the Committee of Defense Ministers meets approximately once each year. The location of the meetings rotates annually and the Minister of Defense of the host country is the Chairman of the Committee for that year.⁸⁵ The infrequency of meetings further increases the importance of Soviet doctrine and policy to the Warsaw Pact.

The Joint Command of the Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact is the primary military executive organ of the Pact. It consists of the Commander-in-Chief of the Joint Armed Forces (JAF) and his deputies.⁸⁶ Unlike the Political Consultative Committee and the Committee of Defense Ministers, it is a continuously functioning organ.⁸⁷ According to the former Commander-in-Chief of the JAF, Marshal Yakubovskiy, the mission of the command and staff of the JAF is to implement the decisions of the Communist and Workers Parties of the Warsaw Pact states.⁸⁸ Considering the leading role of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), this often amounts to implementing the decisions of the CPSU.

From the outset the Commander-in-Chief of the JAF has always been a Soviet Marshal.⁸⁹ Marshal Kulikov, the current Commander-in-Chief and a Soviet First Deputy Minister of Defense, is particularly well suited for this post. He was concerned with problems of coalition warfare while serving as Chief of the Soviet General Staff.⁹⁰ The Commander-in-Chief has a deputy commander from each country in the Pact. His deputies serve concurrently as deputy ministers of defense or chiefs of the general staff of the countries which they represent.⁹¹ The national deputies command the elements of their country's armed forces designated to the JAF.⁹² A permanent staff is attached to the Joint Command of the Warsaw Pact forces. Generals, admirals and officers of all allied armies are permanently assigned to the staff.⁹³ The Chief of Staff of the JAF has always been a Soviet and First Deputy Chief of the Soviet General Staff, with a deputy from each member country of the Warsaw Pact.⁹⁴ These officers, usually in the grade of major general (the equivalent of a US brigadier general) are also deputy chiefs of the general staff of their respective countries. For example, Major General L. Fuzekash, the representative of Hungary, is also the Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Hungarian People's Army.⁹⁵ In addition, at least five other Soviet generals serve on the JAF staff

at the first deputy or deputy chief level.⁹⁶

The staff of the JAF works both for the Commander-in-Chief and the Committee of Defense Ministers.⁹⁷ It arranges the periodic meetings of the Committee of Defense Ministers and the Military Council of the JAF and implements their decisions and recommendations.⁹⁸

Marshal Yakubovskiy has outlined the tasks which are assigned to the staff. These include equipping and training the JAF, improving the organization of forces, increasing their combat capabilities and preparing and conducting exercises, maneuvers, games and other combined activities.⁹⁹ In addition, they are called upon to generalize the experiences of troop and fleet training and to make recommendations for improvement. Their most important function is the development and conduct of training exercises.¹⁰⁰

The Joint Command and Staff operate somewhere between the strategic and operational levels. (See Appendix B for definitions of Soviet military terms). Although Yakubovskiy speaks of conducting exercises at the strategic level, there is no available evidence that the Staff of the JAF has ever conducted a field exercise at this level. These exercises, of which more detail will be provided later, are conducted at the operational level or below. JAF field exercises look more like the operation of a single multinational front than a group of multinational fronts. Hence, it is fair to say that the vast majority of their field experience is at the operational level and below, although command and staff exercises are conducted at the strategic level. Thus, if the Political Consultative Committee develops military doctrine, and the Committee of Defense Ministers defines Pact military science and art, the Commander-in-Chief and his staff are probably developing operational art and to a lesser extent military strategy for the Pact forces. The basic military strategy of combined operations is developed by the Soviet General Staff, with input from the Soviet representatives on the staff of the JAF.

A Military Council of the JAF also was created, along with the Committee of Defense Ministers, at the 1969 meeting of the Political Consultative Committee.¹⁰¹ It appears to have been based on a similar body which existed in the Soviet fronts during World War II and exists today in Soviet military districts. According to Soviet sources, it is a collegial consultative organ which meets twice each year. The members of the council are the deputy commanders of the JAF. The meetings are chaired by the Commander-in-Chief. At the end of each year the Council evaluates combat and operational training of the past year, looks at problems which require further attention, and defines tasks for the forces and fleets in the next training year.¹⁰² As a consultative organ, it is unclear how much authority the council actually wields. However, it does provide the opportunity for allied representatives to influence the actions of the JAF. The infrequency of its meetings and the fact that its recommendations are carried out by the Joint Staff would appear to severely limit the impact that this body has.

The structure of the Joint Command and Staff of the Warsaw Pact is reminiscent of the liaison structure which the Soviets maintained with the allied armies and governments in World War II. This structure permits contact and the expression of opinion and yet it does not hinder the operational ability of the organization. The Soviets stress that, "the collegial form of decision-making is widely used in the organs of military leadership and control of the Joint Armed Forces." They insist that representatives of the allied armies in the joint military organizations have equal rights in the resolution of all questions, and that all

work by the JAF is conducted in close cooperation with the ministers of defense.¹⁰³ All this may be true yet it does not deny the controlling position of the Soviet Union.

In peacetime, all troops allocated to the JAF are under the control of their national authority. They come under the control of the Commander-in-Chief of the Warsaw Pact Forces only during exercises.¹⁰⁴ During time of war, the committed national troops would come under the control of the Commander-in-Chief, a Soviet marshal, with a Soviet chief of staff and a significant Soviet representation throughout the joint organization.¹⁰⁵ It is interesting in this regard to note that the Warsaw Pact forces which conducted the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 were not led by the Commander-in-Chief of the JAF. They were commanded by General Pavlovskiy, the Commander of the Soviet Ground Forces.¹⁰⁶

The JAF is composed of ground forces, air defense forces, air forces, and naval forces. Each country, as indicated above, designates a portion of its armed forces, including ground and sea elements, to the JAF. These allocated troops include necessary control and rear service organs.¹⁰⁷ Not all the forces of a member country are allocated to the JAF. Poland, for example, has operational forces, designated for combined operations within the framework of the Warsaw Pact, and forces for territorial defense.¹⁰⁸

The Commander-in-Chief of the JAF commands the national armies allocated to the JAF only during exercises. However, units within integrated commands are constantly under Warsaw Pact command. The most important such command is the integrated air defense system of the Warsaw Pact. The system is commanded by a Soviet marshal who is also the commander of the Soviet Air Defense Forces.¹⁰⁹ The integrated air defense system is all the more interesting since, at least in Poland, air defense units are considered part of the territorial defense forces.¹¹⁰ Apparently, the air defense integration within the Pact is well established, as the following East German statement indicates: "The Herman Dunker missile unit is handling its mission in coordination with its Soviet brothers-in-arms ..."¹¹¹

The Soviets will admit to no supernational commands; however, Western sources have suggested that the Warsaw Pact Joint Fleet in the Baltic is, or will be, subordinate to the Soviet Baltic Fleet Commander during combat operations.¹¹² The Commander-in-Chief, JAF, has controlled fleet exercises, but it is highly unlikely that a ground officer would control the fleets during actual combat operations, especially in view of the geographical dispersion of the national fleets. It is more likely that the Soviet Supreme Command would control the front naval forces through one of its naval commanders.

The Commander-in-Chief of the JAF maintains a high-level representative with each allied army. The mission of these representatives is, "to render assistance to the national command in training the troops designated to the Joint Armed Forces and also to support continuous and close contact between the joint and national commanders."¹¹³ This representative appears always to be a Soviet lieutenant general or colonel general.¹¹⁴ These representatives have a complete staff.¹¹⁵ This further increases the Soviet presence in the Joint Command. A representative of the Military Council of the JAF is also present in each country, except Romania. Indications are that this representative is also a Soviet officer.¹¹⁶

Although there is little evidence of direct Soviet training of allied units, it appears that training of allied units and exchange of experience among the armies are primary missions of the Joint Command and Staff. The Soviet Union

certainly makes a significant contribution to these tasks. One of the methods employed to increase the level of training is annual meetings of army leaders. Included in these meetings are officers from all branches and arms of service.¹¹⁷ Each year there is a specific theme for the meeting. For example, in 1970 the conference dealt with rear area operations.¹¹⁸

Through these conferences and the efforts of the Joint Staff, the Pact has attempted to maximize both its utilization of training facilities and its training expertise. For economic, political, and training reasons the Pact has sought to find effective ways to share artillery ranges, firing ranges, and training areas.¹¹⁹ This suggests an attempt by the Soviets to obtain access to local training facilities for their troops stationed in NSWP countries.

Training methods, as well as training facilities, are shared by the Pact forces. Standards for combat training are being developed on a joint basis by the Group of Soviet Forces Germany (GSFG) and East German air force units.¹²⁰ In addition, the East German Army has adopted new combat training manuals which are based on corresponding Soviet manuals.¹²¹

Perhaps the area in which the Soviets have made the wisest investment is the individual training of allied officers.

For many years now the military schools of our country have been training highly skilled command, military-political, and military-technical cadres for the fraternal armies ... While successfully mastering comprehensive ideological-theoretical, military, and technical knowledge within the walls of Soviet military academies, the officers of fraternal countries are imbued with a feeling of profound respect for the heroic past of the Soviet people and its Armed Forces, and with a spirit of military friendship and comradeship.¹²²

In recent years, Soviet military schools and academies have trained tens of thousands of foreign soldiers.¹²³ Thousands of officers and generals of NSWP armies have studied in the Soviet Union. Within the East German Army many generals have attended the Soviet Military Academy of the General Staff.¹²⁴ In the description of joint training exercises, the Soviet press often mentions NSWP officers who have attended one of the Soviet military academies.¹²⁵

This substantial investment in the training and indoctrination of allied officers and soldiers supports the primacy of Soviet military science, helps justify general Soviet leadership, and exposes allied officers and soldiers to the Russian language. This in no small way reinforces the importance of Russian as the basic language of the Warsaw Pact. A Czech colonel who worked in the Joint Staff during exercise Shield-76 testifies to the importance of the Russian language "... but if in explanation a hitch arises, we switch to Russian which we all know."¹²⁶

As mentioned, one of the primary missions in peacetime of the Commander-in-Chief, JAF, and his Staff is to organize and conduct the yearly Warsaw Pact training exercises. According to former JAF Commander Yakubovskiy, the scale of these exercises runs from the operational-strategic to the tactical troop level.¹²⁷ It is likely that the strategic level training probably refers to exercises in which the fleets participate. In 1974 and 1977, Yakubovskiy and Kulikov, respectively, ran Warsaw Pact fleet exercises in the Baltic.¹²⁸ None of the publicly announced Pact ground exercises could be interpreted as strategic level exercises. Indeed, few if any could legitimately be called,

at least in terms of numbers of troops, operational level exercises.

The exercises are controlled either by the minister of defense in whose country the exercise takes place or by the Commander-in-Chief, JAF.¹²⁹ As an example, exercise Oder-Neisse in 1969, was run by the Polish Minister of Defense and exercise Brotherhood-in-Arms in October 1970, was led by the Czech Minister of Defense.¹³⁰

The Warsaw Pact conducts a number of different types of exercises including command and staff, field and fleet.¹³¹ The explicit purposes of these exercises are as follows:

- (1) to achieve a single view on questions of military art;
- (2) to encourage the improvement of organizational cooperation and control of allied armies;
- (3) to increase the level of training of commanders and staffs;
- (4) to provide combat training for all personnel.¹³²

Mastering initiative is also an explicitly stated training objective, as it is in all Soviet training exercises.¹³³

While increasing the combat proficiency of commanders, staffs, and troops is an explicit objective of these exercises, these exercises also have a political propaganda objective. "... it must not be felt that difficulties and obstacles cannot occur in the path of developing the military coalition of Socialist states. Here nationalism is the chief danger."¹³⁴ Great pains are taken in organizing and conducting exercises to emphasize the benefits of "socialist internationalism" and the "dangers of nationalism". Indeed, the employment of troops reported in the open press is often designed for political, and not tactical, purposes.

An article in Krasnaya Zvezda reporting on actions in exercise Shield-72, for example, describes an attack in which Polish and Czech tanks worked with Hungarian infantry. Their attack was unsuccessful and the enemy subsequently counterattacked. The enemy counterattack required Soviet artillery and tanks to come to the rescue. Later in the exercise, Soviet aircraft dropped Czech paratroopers.¹³⁵ It is possible that all this close inter-army support had some tactical purpose; however, it is more likely that these actions were designed to publicly demonstrate the close cooperation of "fraternal armies". This portion of the exercise was designed for its political impact.

This is not to suggest that exercises are only shows staged for propaganda and political reasons. Serious training takes place, and, although it is the demonstration of brotherhood which is emphasized in the Soviet press, the exercises are designed with tactical objectives in mind. During exercise Oder-Neisse, Soviet, Polish and East German motorized infantry conducted exercises along the Baltic coast, including a landing of seaborne forces. In the course of the exercise, the troops were required to cross both the Varta and Oder rivers.¹³⁶ In this case, the training was consistent with an operational role that the Poles and East Germans might expect in the event of war in central Europe. Likewise, in Shield-72, in spite of the rather strange mixture of battalions (Hungarian, Polish, Czech, etc.), mentioned earlier, the reinforcement of local Czech units by Poles, Hungarians and Germans in the event of hostilities, is consistent with Soviet doctrine and experience.

The tactical play of the exercises follows a fairly set pattern. Consistent with the professed defensive nature of the Warsaw Pact, hostilities are initiated

by an enemy attack. After an initial success, the enemy is halted and the "Red" armies counterattack. In the course of this attack, the "Red" forces are required to cross water obstacles. Having successfully overcome the obstacles, the attack is continued deep into the enemy rear.¹³⁷ Airborne forces are often employed in conjunction with the ground attack.

Cross attachment of national forces is emphasized. Although a good deal of this cross attachment appears to be for political, rather than tactical reasons, it does take place:

A great deal of attention is devoted to the exchange of operations groups, communications personnel and communications equipment, as well as to the resubordination of units to the command element of the corresponding fraternal army during exercises.¹³⁸

East German units were subordinate to GSFG during operations in March 1969, and Czech units were subordinate to Soviet command and vice versa during exercises conducted in February 1970.¹³⁹

In spite of the magnitude of Warsaw Pact training, there is a relative lack of training for rear service units. The August 1968 Nieman exercise, a prelude to the invasion of Czechoslovakia, was the first such exercise. Since that time there have been only three rear services exercises reported in the open press.¹⁴⁰ In addition, most Warsaw Pact exercises are of short duration, less than a week, and require little in the way of rear service support.

As mentioned earlier, the Joint Staff is responsible for conducting joint training exercises. This is a monumental task, especially during the larger exercises in which all the Pact armies participate. An article in Krasnaya Zvezda provided some insight into how the Joint Staff managed Pact exercise Shield-76.¹⁴¹

The staff buildings were movable and the working area was partitioned by branch of service. Representatives of all branches and arms of service, including aviation, were present on the staff. The role of artillery and communications officers was particularly emphasized, presumably because of the need for fire control and communications support. All officers of the Joint Staff, regardless of their country of origin, had a higher military education.

In addition to the branch and service representatives, each army has a representative on the staff. For example, the Soviet representative in Shield-76 was a colonel, graduate of the Military Academy of the General Staff. An East German lieutenant colonel, a graduate of the Malinovskiy Military Academy of the Armored Forces, a Polish Air Force colonel and a Czech colonel of artillery were also staff members. There is evidently a certain amount of continuity within the Joint Staff since both the Czech and Polish colonels had participated in a number of previous exercises. Nevertheless, the Soviets note "differences (among allies) in the extent of combat experience, especially experience of staff work in combat conditions."¹⁴²

The Staff operated a joint communication center during Shield-76. Communicators from each army manned the center and communications were conducted in each unit's language.¹⁴³ There was no apparent attempt to operate on the basis of a single language. Adjacent to the communications center were maps

and map tables. The tactical situation was continually updated on these maps.

From reports on the Brotherhood-in-Arms exercise conducted in 1970, it is known that a "Bulletin of the Maneuvers" is published for each exercise. The Bulletin presents the operational-tactical situation and outlines the projected flow of the exercise.¹⁴⁴ The exercises are not completely staged however. A multinational control group is responsible for monitoring the actions of participating units. The control group influences the exercise based on the actions of the commanders in the field. One such group in the Brotherhood-in-Arms included a Soviet major and an East German captain.¹⁴⁵

IV. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of available information it is impossible to determine precisely how the Soviets will conduct future combined operations with NSWP forces. The Soviet experience of World War II is by no means directly applicable to the contemporary scene, and open source reports on Warsaw Pact organization and exercises provide very little of substance. Nonetheless, the World War II experience and open source information on the Warsaw Pact military organization and joint exercises do provide insights into how the Soviets might operate in the future. With this in mind, the following is presented as a scenario consistent with Soviet writings, World War II experience and evidence from Warsaw Pact exercises. It can in no way be considered to be definitive. Further research and analysis is required to even begin to adequately determine Soviet doctrine in this area. This scenario is presented only to summarize current research in the area and to encourage further research and analysis.

Sokolovskiy's writings and the Soviet World War II experience indicate that in future combined operations NSWP forces in the main theater of operations will be under the control of a Soviet front. Although certain NSWP forces in the main theater, such as the Poles, have multi-army forces, there is no evidence to indicate that the Soviets would permit these armies to operate in their own independent front. While this is a possibility, there is nothing in the Soviet literature to suggest it will be the case. Since central Europe is the main theater of European operations, the troops of East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and probably Hungary would be subordinate to one or more Soviet fronts. Romania and Bulgaria may not initially be considered by the Soviets to be within the main theater of operation, and as such their ground forces could remain under national control. It seems likely, however, that the naval forces of these countries would be subordinate to the Soviet Black Sea Fleet.

Based on Soviet World War II experience, evidence from Warsaw Pact exercises, and inherent Soviet desire for maximum control it would appear that NSWP forces, which are subordinate to a Soviet front, will be further subordinated to Soviet armies and corps. At the tactical level, World War II experience suggests that Soviet and non-Soviet units will frequently be cross-attached. Commanders of non-Soviet units might well have Soviet units under their control. If the experience of World War II is valid, Soviet fire support units will be frequently attached to non-Soviet maneuver units.

It is not possible to determine the specific missions of non-Soviet Warsaw Pact units in future combined operations based on available information; however, the following scenario is consistent with general Soviet doctrine and exercise scenarios. Assuming that GSFG and East German forces conduct the main Warsaw Pact attack, it can be expected that NSWP armies will operate on

the flanks of this attack. East German and Polish forces, together with the Soviets, could operate to the north of the main attack along the Baltic coast. This is a mission which has been repeatedly practiced by the Poles and East Germans during exercises. Czech, East German, Polish and possibly Hungarian forces in conjunction with the Soviets could operate on the southern flank of the main attack. Lower level, non-Soviet units will likely be assigned flank and rear guard missions by their Soviet commanders, consistent with the experience of World War II.

Non-Soviet units may be employed by the Soviets in the first echelon of the attack. It seems likely that this will be limited to secondary attacks on the northern and southern flanks where the concentration of non-Soviet troops will be greater. Such a first echelon employment might be a political necessity in areas where the Soviets feel the loyalty of the national army is suspect. The Czechs may be an example. In general, World War II experience indicates that non-Soviet units will most often be located in the second echelon of the attacking forces. East German units, for example, may follow units of GSFG in the main attack.

Allied troops may also be responsible for rear area security. This may well be the only mission assigned to Bulgarian and Romanian troops. The operational forces of East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary could be assigned this task by the Soviet Supreme Command as well. Operational forces assigned this mission would assist local territorial forces.

Partisan activities in Western Europe may be extensive. East German units would probably make up the bulk of this effort; however, they may be supplemented by Polish, Czech and Soviet units. In addition to partisan activities, conventional airborne operations in NATO's rear area can be expected by certain Polish, Czech and East German units.

Finally, as was the case in World War II, non-Soviet units will often quite likely be employed for political rather than tactical reasons. An East German partisan or airborne unit may well be the first Warsaw Pact forces to enter West German soil. The publicized mission of this unit would be to help progressive elements in West Germany defeat the "fascist" West German Army and to extend the benefits of socialism to East Germany's West German brothers. However, since the Soviets cannot be sure how East German troops will respond in battle against their West German brothers, it is likely that they will prevent all but the most elite units from facing West German units in direct combat.

The Soviets will likely employ, as was the experience in World War II, a vast array of liaison officers, representatives, and advisers to allied armies and governments. The Soviet General Staff will probably maintain representatives at allied headquarters and high commands. The Soviet front commander will provide liaison officers to his subordinate allied commanders. If past experience is a guide, these representatives will help coordinate the combat activities of the subordinate units and handle all details related to joint Soviet-allied operations.

Because the political situation has changed considerably in Eastern Europe since World War II and the Soviets have trained thousands of Warsaw Pact officers at their military schools and academies, the Soviets will probably not provide instructors as such to their allied units as frequently as they did during the war. However, liaison representatives from high level Soviet units

will likely be attached to non-Soviet units down to regimental level. These liaison officers will probably be subordinate to the Soviet General Staff representative at the higher headquarters. Liaison officers will be in a position to assist non-Soviet units consistent with the desires of the Soviet Supreme Command.

Certain armies which are less politically or professionally reliable may receive Soviet instructors. Romania and Bulgaria would almost certainly require technical assistance. It is likely that the Soviets would wish to help ensure the political reliability of Czech and Hungarian forces through the use of Soviet instructors or advisers.

At the outset of hostilities it is unlikely that any allied units will be directly commanded by Soviet officers. Soviet liaison representatives, and instructors will be in a position, however, to take control if the situation should dictate.

Consistent with the standard conception of operational control, allied governments and high commands will be responsible for the manning, maintenance, and supply of their armies. Initially, East Germany and probably portions of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary will be considered by the Soviets to be in the "zone of combat operations". In these areas Soviet military authority will have predominance over the local governmental authority. The Soviet status of forces agreement with East Germany allows for such a contingency.¹⁴⁶

As mentioned earlier, territorial forces of the Pact countries will be responsible for control and security in the rear area. These territorial forces may be supplemented by operational forces of the JAF. Rear area security forces may be under the control of the Commander-in-Chief of the JAF. A possibility which will be discussed below.

In the Soviet conception, combat operations in any future European conflict will be short. Therefore, necessary coordination with, and agreement by, Warsaw Pact governments will be accomplished by the Soviets prior to the commencement of hostilities. Such coordination is another potential task for the JAF Command and Staff. Of course, if initial Warsaw Pact offensive operations are unsuccessful and Pact forces are required to defend on their territory, Soviet authority may be severely questioned by the other members of the coalition and individuals and groups may abandon the Soviet cause. Thus, impossibly complicating the Soviets' problems of control and coordination.

In the preceding outline of Soviet employment of non-Soviet units the Command of the JAF has been almost totally ignored. Yet, the Soviets and their Warsaw Pact allies have committed scarce resources to establishing and maintaining this organization. If we are correct in assuming that the Soviet Supreme Command wishes to organize and conduct combat operations without substantial NSWP influence, what role with the JAF Command play? At least four possibilities exist.

The JAF Command could become the basis for a Soviet front headquarters. This front might consist of East German and Polish units along with the Soviet Northern Group of Forces and operate along the Baltic coast on the northern flank of the main attack. Likewise the JAF Command could control a front on the southern flank of the main attack which might include units from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and East Germany and the Soviet Central and Southern Groups of Forces. Finally, the JAF Command could control the main attack, GSFG and East German forces. The JAF headquarters at Lvov is situated geographically to

support each front; however, it is well behind the frontier and would have to be relocated if it were to operate as a front headquarters. The JAF Commander-in-Chief, a 1st Deputy Minister of Defense, is too senior to command a Soviet front; thus, a command reorganization would be required to convert the JAF headquarters to a front headquarters. In addition, the Soviet component of the JAF staff would have to be augmented in order to operate as a front headquarters.

A second and more likely option would be for the JAF Command to operate as a theater headquarters controlling a group of fronts. The integrated structure of the JAF Command and Staff would facilitate its control of a group of multinational fronts. The Commander-in-Chief's rank is more appropriate for this mission and the dominate position of Soviet officers in the organization would facilitate coordination with the Soviet Supreme Command. The geographical location of the headquarters is also conducive to multi-front control. Finally, staff exercises have provided the JAF Command with considerable experience in controlling large formations.

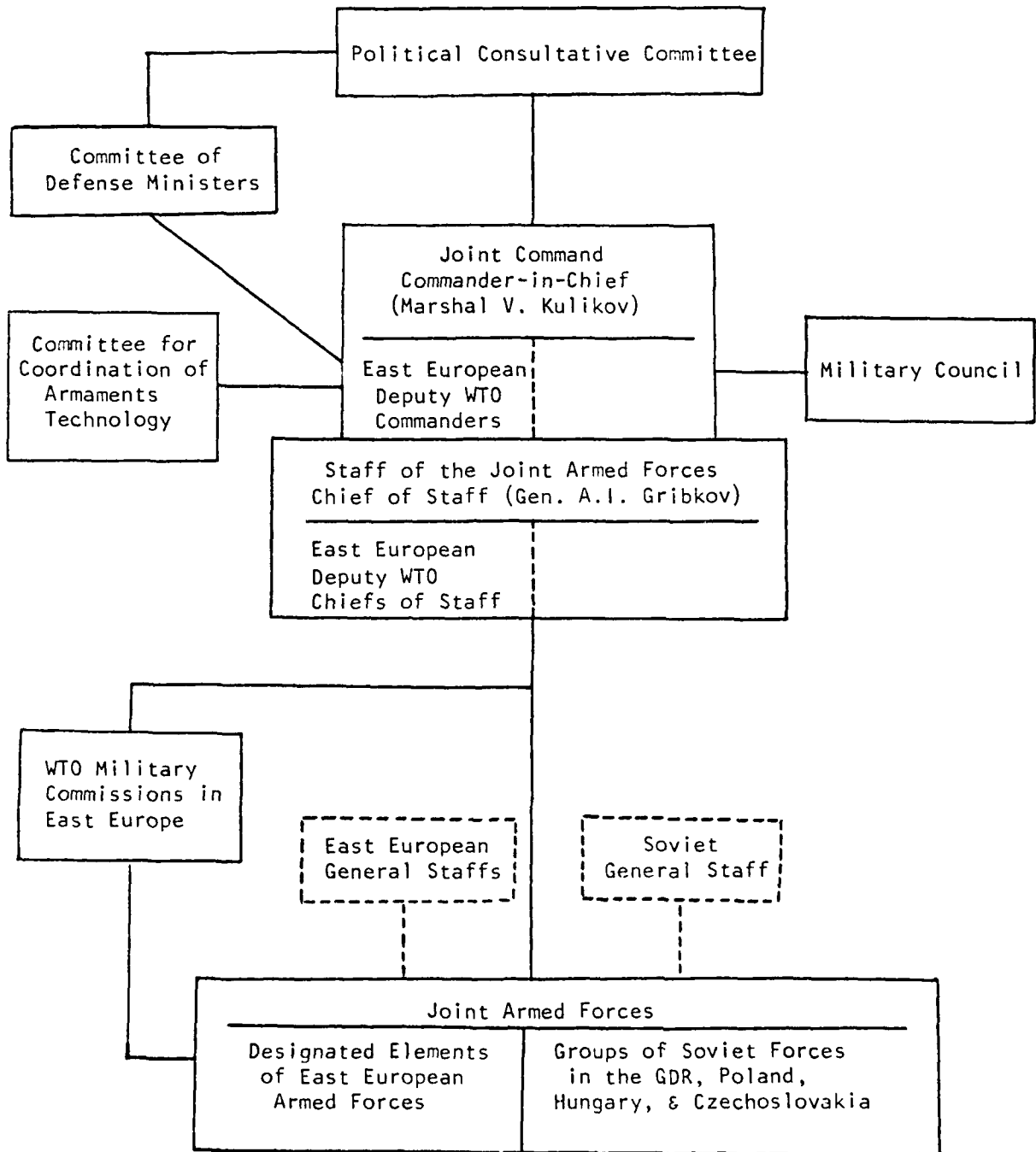
It is not clear, however, whether the Soviet Supreme Command would permit a joint headquarters, no matter how dominated by Soviet officers, to control Soviet fronts. Historically, the Supreme Command has been very protective of its prerogatives and unwilling to share either authority or control. Operating through the JAF Command would require the Soviet Supreme Command to share both.

The third mission which the JAF Command and Staff might perform is the command of the Warsaw Pact rear area. The peacetime structure of the JAF Command and Staff makes it well suited for liaison with local governments. It is located in the rear area along the primary line of communication between the Soviet Union and the front. The integrated air defense system, an important part of rear area security, is already in operation within the JAF Command structure. In addition, the rank structure of the JAF Command and Staff is consistent with such a mission. At the present time, however, there is no evidence that the JAF has practiced such a mission in its exercises.

Finally, the Soviet component of the JAF Command and Staff could be used as a liaison element of the Soviet General Staff. Senior Soviet representatives are already in place in the allied countries. Presently, they are nominally representatives of the Commander-in-Chief of the JAF. The channels of communication between the Soviets and their allies are currently available and exercised by the JAF Command.

This paper has offered a look at Soviet thoughts and experience in coalition warfare, and more importantly, at how the Soviets might conduct future combat operations with their allies. The major point which must be understood is the need for NATO to be prepared to fight an enemy coalition in Europe. While it is true that the Soviets are the basic component of the Warsaw Pact forces, they cannot wage a European war alone. In conjunction with this, it is important to be conscious of the Pact's national and ethnic make-up and to design psychological and tactical operations to exploit the weaknesses inherent in it. Only by focusing on the Warsaw Pact as a coalition and addressing its organization for and training and experience in coalition warfare can NATO formulate effective measures to defend against it.

APPENDIX A



WTO military command structure
taken from A. Ross Johnson,
Soviet-East European Military Relations:
An Overview

APPENDIX B

Definitions of Soviet Military Terms*

- Military Doctrine - A nation's officially accepted system of scientifically founded views on the nature of modern wars and the use of the armed forces in them, and also on the requirements arising from these views regarding the country and its armed forces being made ready for war.
- Military Science - A system of knowledge concerning the nature, essence, and content of armed conflict, and concerning the manpower, facilities, and methods for conducting combat operations by means of armed forces and other comprehensive support.
- Military Art - The theory and practice of engaging in combat, operations, and armed conflict as a whole, with the use of all the resources of the service branches and services of the armed forces, and also support of combat activities in every regard. Military art, as a scientific theory, is the main field of military science, and includes tactics, operational art, and strategy, which constitute an organic unity and are interdependent.
- Military Strategy - The highest level in the field of military art, constituting a system of scientific knowledge concerning the phenomena and laws of armed conflict.
- Operational Art - A component of military art, dealing with the theory and practice of preparing for and conducting combined and independent operations by major field forces or major formations of the services. Operational art is the connecting link between strategy and tactics.
- Tactics - A special field in the theory and practice of military art which studies the objective laws of combat and develops methods preparing for combat and conducting it, on land, at sea, and in the air.

* All definitions are found in Comparative Dictionary of US-Soviet Terms, DIA, August 1977.

FOOTNOTES

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- ¹¹ Yakubovskiy, 1975, p.57.
- ¹² Monin, p.308.
- ¹³ Monin, p.358.
- ¹⁴ Monin, p.337.
- ¹⁵ Sokolovskiy, p.433.
- ¹⁶ Monin, pp.407-408.
- ¹⁷ Monin, p.258.
- ¹⁸ Marshal A.A. Grechko, Osvoboditel'naya missiya sovetskikh vooruzhennykh sil vo vtoroy mirovoy voyne (Moskva: Politizdat, 1971), p.64 (hereafter referred to as Grechko, 1971); Monin, p.64.
- ¹⁹ Monin, p.48.
- ²⁰ Monin, p.47.
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Marshal Grechko, 1960-1967
Marshal Yakubovskiy, 1967-November 1976
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General A.I. Antonov, 1955-1962
General P.I. Batov, October 1962-1965
General M.I. Kazakov, 1965-1968
General S.M. Shtemenko, August 1968-October 1976
General A.I. Gribkov, October 1976-present.
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